Commission on Connecticut's Future

May 12, 2014 9:00 AM DOT Headquarters

Minutes

Committee Chair: Catherine Smith

Members Present: Todd Berch, Henry Lowendorf, Steve Paulone, John Harrity, Joe Brennan (representing John Rathgeber), Jacqueline Johnson, Andrew Zehner, Karl Prewo, and Sharon Palmer

- I. Welcome
- II. "Making Great Transportation," Presentation: Commissioner Jim Redeker, Dept. of Transportation
 - a. 2013-2014 was the 4th worst storm year in CT history
 - b. CT has the lowest cost per mile of salt/plowing in all of New England
 - c. While we're over the storm budget, we're better off than other northern states
 - d. Historically, DOT has been able to borrow from rail for storm coverage, but not this year with the Metro North issues
 - e. CT has had 30 years of tree neglect
 - f. We have to resurface 225 miles of road per year
 - g. As we restripe, DOT is focusing on building complete streets with pedestrian and bicycle access
 - h. The Q-bridge is the largest infrastructure in the country right now
 - Design/build accelerated project in Bridgeport will shut down the bridge for days rather than years
 - j. Waterbury I-84 widening will take \$400m and 5 years
 - k. Aetna viaduct project will entail highway rehabilitation, rail relocation and city redevelopment
 - I. RAIL
 - i. We have a 100+ year old rail system
 - ii. Investing in new M-8 cars
 - iii. Building in redundancy

- iv. CT owns the line from NY to New Haven, so it doesn't have access to the same federal dollars other tracks have
- v. The backlog on the New Haven line is estimated to be \$3B
- vi. We're adding real-time messaging systems to improve the commuter experience
- vii. Investing in freight lines—state owns 60% of freight lines, but they're Civil War era
- viii. Federal dollars will help fund the New Haven- Hartford- Springfield line, going from 6 high-speed trains a day to 25

m. TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

- i. Smart growth—partners DOT, DOH, DECD
- ii. Currently projects in Stamford and Meriden

n. SOFTER SIDE OF DOT

- i. Congestion relief
- ii. Express lanes and tolling
- iii. High toll rates for peak times
- iv. EV charging stations to end range anxiety
- v. "complete streets"

o. BUDGET

- i. Most of the DOT budget goes to highway vs. transit (3000 employees...only 40 work on transit)
- ii. 50% of DOT budget is federal, 50% from state bonding
- iii. It will eventually be 80/20
- iv. \$1.6B of transit funding from 2007 is almost depleted
- v. Highway funding could dry up by August

p. TRANSFORMCT

i. DOT is completing its first strategic plan

III. Discussion

- a. DOT might be a great place to make sure we are manufacturing the products we use for civilian/green projects
- b. There are no rail manufacturers in the US—perhaps CT could lead the way
- c. All DOT labor comes from CT

IV. Future Meetings/Presenters/topics

a. Waterbury-Post University

- b. New Haven-Yale School of Forestry- Mayor Toni Harp
- c. New London
- d. Miriam Pemberton
- e. Public/private partnerships
- f. Presentations from Industry